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THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 71/NO. 27 JULY 9, 2007

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Klansman convicted in 1964 murder of Black youths

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Thousands meet in Atlanta as U.S. Social Forum opens

Militant/Ben Joyce

Thousands march in opening ceremony of U.S. Social Forum in Atlanta June 27

BY OLYMPIA NEWTON

ATLANTA, June 27—More than 5,000 people marched here today for the opening ceremony of the U.S. Social Forum. The march kicked off what will be five days of nonstop political discussion and debate on questions ranging from the struggle for Black freedom, to the fight against imperialist war, to how to fight against environmental degradation.

Young people, trade unionists, and others have come from nearly every U.S. state as well as from other countries. Signs and banners carried here today ranged from "No blood for oil— Let's share the world's resources," to "Eat peace: become a vegetarian," to "Legalization now!" Many contingents marched behind banners of the trade union, nonprofit, political, or social service organizations with which they work. Such

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Socialists campaign at U.S. Social Forum with 'Militant' and 'New International'

BY BEN JOYCE

ATLANTA, June 27—Supporters of the *Militant* were out in full force today at the opening march of the U.S. Social Forum. At the five-day event, which concludes July 1, they have

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Oregon: 500 protest 'la migra' raid

BY EDWIN FRUIT AND CARMEN MAYMI-O'REILLY

PORTLAND, Oregon, June 24—Close to 500 people assembled today outside the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) headquarters here to protest a June 12 raid at the Del Monte Fresh Produce plant. From the ICE headquarters, they marched through downtown Portland for a rally at Pioneer Park, chanting "*Si se puede*" and "Stop the raids and deportations."

The June 12 raid targeted the fruit and vegetable processing plant and a temporary agency that hires its workers. In all, 167 workers were arrested.

"We came here to work, not to rob anybody," said María Delgado, who was recently released after being arrested in the Del Monte raid. She displayed the ankle bracelet she is required to wear. "I have to go to the ICE headquarters three times a week, but I am not allowed to work, so we have no money." She said that churches raised money to help with immediate expenses for some of the affected families, including hers, but after July 1 she doesn't know how they will

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Militant/Mary Martin

María Delgado, a worker arrested by immigration cops in the Del Monte Fresh Produce plant raid, speaks at June 24 rally in Portland, Oregon. She shows electronic bracelet ICE placed on her ankle to track her as she awaits her deportation hearing.

10,000 U.S. troops cordon off Iraqi city

Baathist militias aid U.S. occupation forces

Reuters/Alister Bull

U.S. warplanes destroy a building in Baquba, northeast of Baghdad, June 24.

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON, June 26—The U.S. military announced today it has "seized control" of the western part of Baquba without much resistance from al-Qaeda in Iraq. The city of 300,000 is under curfew and all passages in and out have been sealed.

In the first four days of the offensive by 10,000 U.S. troops, 68 members of al-Qaeda had reportedly been killed.

In a news briefing June 22, Lt. Gen. Ray Odierno said the offensive, named Operation Arrowhead Ripper, is targeted against al-Qaeda in Iraq and "Shi'a extremists" north and northeast of Baghdad. It is part of other operations by U.S. troops in Baghdad and the largely Sunni Anbar province against militias connected with Shiite and Sunni capitalists who have been vying

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Washington, Moscow clash over Kosova

U.S. rulers manipulate Albanians' demand for self-determination to further their 'war on terror'

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

June 26—Washington and its allies are on a collision course with Moscow and Belgrade over Kosova, an autonomous region in the southern part of former Yugoslavia whose overwhelmingly Albanian population is clamoring for independence. The U.S. rulers are manipulating the Kosovar Albanians' quest for self-determination to create the conditions for restoring capitalism in that part of the Balkans, tighten the imperialist encirclement of Russia, and further the U.S.-led "war on terrorism."

Russian foreign minister Sergei Lavrov lambasted U.S. and allied government leaders June 14 for holding secret talks on Kosova. U.S., British, German, Italian, and United Nations representatives had met privately in Paris two days earlier to conduct negotiations on Kosova.

On June 21, these governments circulated a resolution at the UN Security Council outlining their plan for Kosova. Moscow, which had not been invited to

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PM Beef workers in Minnesota fight for contract

BY TOM FISKE

WORTHINGTON, Minnesota, June 23—On a visit to this small southwestern Minnesota city, *Militant* reporters interviewed several workers who were involved in a successful fight to win union representation at the nearby PM Beef Holdings slaughterhouse.

On May 25 workers at that plant voted 231–193 to be represented by United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 1161.

Most of the workers at the plant, which is near the town of Windom, live in Worthington. This city was the site of an immigration raid on December

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New Zealand: death spotlights greed of power company

BY MIKE TUCKER

AUCKLAND, New Zealand—A 44-year-old woman died here May 29 less than three hours after electricity to her house was shut off by the power company, leaving her unable to use an oxygen machine on which she was dependent.

The death dominated headlines in this country for days and put a spotlight on the situation facing thousands of working people unable to pay their power bills.

Folole Muliaga, a preschool teacher, had been ill and unable to work since January. Following hospital treatment, she returned home May 11 with an oxygen machine to assist her breathing. Folole's husband, Lopaavea, is a hotel kitchen hand, earning NZ$12 an hour (NZ$1 = US 75 cents), slightly above minimum wage. Without Folole's wages, the Muliaga family struggled to meet everyday expenses.

The couple and their four children moved to New Zealand six years ago from Samoa, a former New Zealand colony.

The family had made two partial payments on their electricity bill over the previous month, but still owed NZ$168.40. Mercury Energy, the power company, sent a contractor to disconnect their electricity May 29.

When the family exposed the death in the media, Mercury Energy chiefs initially responded that they had done nothing wrong. "Mercury: We're in the clear," proclaimed the front page of the *New Zealand Herald* June 1. But as the story was picked up by news media around the world, Prime Minister Helen Clark led the way in seeking to minimize the damage. "My advice to Mercury Energy is, stop digging. The public is outraged by what has happened. These excuses just aren't going to wash. 'Fess up, say you made a mistake," she told the power company.

Muliaga family member and spokesperson Brenden Sheehan called for the managers of the state-owned power company to be fired.

Clark announced the government would introduce new guidelines for procedures to be followed by electricity companies when dealing with unpaid bills. Sheehan responded that the move was not enough. He called for regulations that are enforceable and backed by penalties.

Amid the controversy the public got a glimpse of the scale of domestic electricity disconnections taking place. Although most power companies refuse to disclose figures, the government revealed that its social welfare agency handles 32,000 cases a year. Mercury Energy, with 350,000 accounts in Auckland, told the government that it disconnects 150 households a day.

Over the past decade, electricity prices have increased at more than double the inflation rate. Previously owned and controlled by the government and elected local bodies, the utility was broken up and privatized through a series of measures in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

Militant/Terry Coggan

Brenden Sheehan, whose oxygen machine–dependent relative Folole Muliaga died after power company Mercury Energy cut off electricity to her home for nonpayment, speaks at May 31 rally outside the company headquarters in Auckland, New Zealand.

"My family's tragedy was caused by lack of money," Brenden Sheehan told a 40-strong union rally outside the Centra hotel June 11. Workers at the hotel, where Lopaavea Muliaga works, have been conducting rolling strikes and pickets to demand improved wages. "It's time to unite against bosses who won't pay a decent wage," Sheehan said.

"Our fight is also about conditions," Paul Butler, a worker at the hotel, told the rally. "We are constantly understaffed and threatened by management."

Police announced June 12 that they would not charge anyone over Folole's death.

The Muliaga family has condemned how they were treated during the police investigation of the death and have lodged a complaint.

Boston newspaper covers socialist campaign

The following article is reprinted from the June 9, 2007, Boston-based Spanish-language newspaper Siglo 21. *It was originally published under the headline, "Candidates hold discussion at forum. The present proposed immigration bill has to be rejected." Translation by the* Militant.

BY DIEGO LUIS PEÑA ÁLVAREZ

EAST BOSTON, Massachusetts—An important forum organized by the Socialist Workers Party and the *Militant* newspaper was held on busy Bennington Street in East Boston, and took up issues related to the current immigration bill being debated in the U.S. Congress.

The main speakers at this event were William Estrada, candidate for City Councillor At-Large in Boston, Betsy Farley, also a candidate to City Councillor District 1, and Patricia Montes, of the group Centro Presente, who didn't attend. Also present were known leaders of pro-immigrant organizations. It was noticeable that the majority of the participants were U.S.-born residents, whose interventions voiced their total disagreement to the current proposed immigration bill.

In his intervention, William Estrada highlighted the disadvantages of the immigration bill proposal, which in no way benefits either the working class or undocumented immigrants in general, he said.

"In its contents, this proposed bill is harmful to immigrant workers. It's better to reject it in its totality since it is designed so that the bosses can increase their profits with the exploitation of the working class, of those immigrant workers who leave their countries behind in search of better opportunities. This proposed bill has nothing good; it should be rejected," said Estrada.

Sergio Reyes, of the May Day Coalition, went further, calling on the Democrats to fulfill their promises made before they were elected as a majority in Congress.

"This proposed bill is the legalization of slavery. The Democrats have a big responsibility for what's going on. Immigrants voted for them to become the majority to come up with the solution to the immigration problem, but they ended up being just like the Republicans," said Reyes, pointing to Governor Deval Patrick, as an example.

"During his campaign for governor, Deval spoke about two specific things: driver's licenses for all in Massachusetts, documented or not. He also said, enrollment at universities for all. However, he's been in office for a year and nothing. That shows you once more why we are losing credibility in politicians," concluded the leader.

THE MILITANT

'Really represents my views'

The 'Militant' really represents my views on immigration and the struggle of immigrant workers. It covers the wars that the United States is pursuing around the world and the inequality the working class faces in the U.S.

—Ernesto Rivera
Hyattsville, Maryland

Ernesto Rivera is a plant engineer and shop steward in the International Union of Operating Engineers Local 99.

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Washington, Tel Aviv back Fatah 'emergency gov't'

BY PAUL PEDERSON

June 23—Washington and Tel Aviv have thrown their support behind a new "emergency government" appointed by Palestinian National Authority (PNA) president Mahmoud Abbas of the Fatah party June 17 following the military takeover of the Gaza Strip by Hamas.

"Our hope is that President Abbas and the prime minister, Fayyad—who's a good fella—will be strengthened to the point where they can lead the Palestinians in a different direction," U.S. president George Bush announced in a June 19 press conference alongside Israeli prime minister Ehud Olmert.

Olmert announced his government would release $400 million in Palestinian tax revenues to the new administration. The funds had been frozen in Israel since Hamas, a bourgeois party branded by Washington and Tel Aviv as "terrorists," won a majority in the PNA elections 18 months ago.

Abbas announced the dismissal of that Hamas-led PNA administration and appointed the new one in an effort to reassert Fatah's control over the West Bank following its military defeat in Gaza at the hands of Hamas. The five-day offensive by the numerically inferior Hamas forces routed Fatah—its latest loss in an ongoing power struggle with Hamas.

Salam Fayyad, the newly appointed prime minister, was a former finance minister in the Fatah-controlled PNA. With a PhD in economics from the University of Texas, Fayyad worked at the World Bank in Washington from 1987–95 before taking a post as the International Monetary Fund representative to Palestine.

Following the June 14 seizure of the PNA's Preventative Security headquarters in Gaza, Hamas leaders revealed widespread evidence of the close collaboration established between the CIA and Fatah following the 1998 Wye River Accords.

"They are going to identify Fatah with the CIA," Robert Baer, a former CIA operations officer in the Middle East, told the *New York Sun*. "They are going to show a record of training, spying on Hamas."

Fatah, which dominated political life in the Palestinian territories for about 40 years, has seen its popular support steadily erode.

In January 2006, Fatah was dealt a resounding defeat by Hamas in elections to the Palestinian National Council—the PNA parliament. While much of the press painted Hamas's action as a new surge of "Islamism," for many, the support for Hamas was as much a rejection of the political and class course of Fatah.

For decades, the Fatah leadership pursued a course of accommodation and collaboration with Washington and Tel Aviv, but in the end has little to show for it. The gap has deepened between the majority of Palestinians living in the refugee camps and elsewhere in the territories and a wealthy minority associated with the PNA bureaucracy, whose actions have been marked by corruption and thuggery.

This course increasingly alienated many searching for an effective way to resist the brutality of the Israeli occupation and advance the Palestinian national struggle. Hamas—which refused to negotiate with Tel Aviv, while promoting the tactic of suicide bombings and the perspective of establishing an "Islamic republic"—began to grow in strength.

"The majority can't explain why they voted for Hamas," Khaled Abu Khatah Barghouti, 36, a director of social services for the PNA in Gaza told the *New York Times* following the election in January 2006. "But if you sit with them they will say: 'We hate Fatah. They did nothing for us. A few poor people suddenly became rich people."

Meanwhile, Tel Aviv has exploited the paralyzing factionalism in the leadership of the Palestinian national movement to pursue a policy it calls "unilateral disengagement." Tel Aviv has removed hard-to-defend Israeli settlements in Gaza and has begun to do the same in areas of the West Bank. At the same time, the Israeli military has maintained steady pressure on any Palestinian group that carries out armed resistance against the occupiers. The aim is ultimately to establish firm borders for the state of Israel that are walled off from the Palestinian territories.

Use of economic aid and economic strangulation has been a key weapon in this strategy. Washington and Tel Aviv both announced they would begin funneling money and other aid to the Abbas/Fayyad administration on the West Bank, while intensifying the economic squeeze on Gaza.

Health-care workers rally in New Jersey

Militant/Angel Lariscy

NEWARK, New Jersey, June 21—Four hundred members of the National Union of Hospital and Health Care Employees and their supporters marched here today to demand "justice in health care" and a decent contract. The union represents more than 6,000 health-care workers at nearly 20 hospitals and nursing homes whose contracts expire June 30.

—ANGEL LARISCY

Vietnamese victims of Agent Orange poisoning demand justice, compensation

BY RÓGER CALERO

NEW YORK, June 18—A three-judge panel of the U.S. Second Circuit Court of Appeals heard oral arguments here today on a class action lawsuit on behalf of millions of Vietnamese victims of Agent Orange poisoning.

The lawsuit charges U.S. chemical manufacturers, which supplied the U.S. armed forces during the Vietnam War with the herbicide that became known as Agent Orange, for knowingly providing the poisonous defoliant to be sprayed indiscriminately. The lawsuit seeks compensation, payment for cleaning up contaminated areas, and medical care for more than 3 million Vietnamese suffering from illnesses linked to exposure to dioxin, a highly toxic carcinogen contained in Agent Orange.

"We have come to court seeking justice," said plaintiff Nguyen Van Quy, speaking to the press and a support rally at nearby Foley Square Park before the hearing. "The chemical companies must be forced to pay compensation to me and my children," he said. Nguyen was exposed to Agent Orange while serving as a communication line repairman in the Vietnam People's Army in the 1970s.

More than 250 people, the majority of them supporters of the international campaign to win compensation for Vietnamese victims of dioxin poisoning, attended today's court hearing.

Also present were Nguyen Thi Hong, Nguyen Muoi, and Vo Thanh Hai, who are suffering from Agent Orange–related diseases. The three traveled along with Nguyen Van Quy from Vietnam. In addition to appearing at the court hearing, they are touring U.S. cities to win support for their campaign.

During the Vietnam War, U.S. forces sprayed some 20 million gallons of Agent Orange and other defoliants over 5.5 million acres in south Vietnam, as well as in Laos and Cambodia. Washington claims they did so to deprive fighters of the National Liberation Front (NLF) of vegetation they used for cover and food, although civilian areas were targeted, as well. The massive use of the deadly herbicide during the decade-long assault on Vietnam also poisoned the water supplies and soil, leaving a lasting impact that continues to this day.

While the U.S. Veteran's Administration recognizes about 13 illnesses as being linked to exposure to Agent Orange, Washington refuses to acknowledge that Agent Orange is responsible for the large number of cases of children born with birth defects and other ailments among the peoples of Southeast Asia. In February, the U.S. government agreed to pay $400,000 toward a study to remove dioxin residues in Vietnam's Da Nong province, but it has otherwise refused to provide funds to clean up the areas that their bombs and chemical agents destroyed.

"I did not participate in the war," said Vo Thanh Hai, who was exposed to dioxin while replanting trees in defoliated areas in Nam Dong province. "My mission was to rebuild the country after so many years of war. That is why my family did not hesitate to move in a region we knew was a hot spot for Agent Orange," he said.

Today's hearing was an appeal of the 2005 dismissal of the lawsuit on grounds of lack of "scientific information" linking the massive instances of birth defects, cancer, and other ailments directly to Washington's use of Agent Orange. Earlier in the day, a related compensation case on behalf of U.S. Vietnam War veterans was argued here. In 1984, U.S. veterans exposed to Agent Orange won $180 million from the chemical companies.

At the court hearing, Jonathan Moore, the attorney representing the Vietnamese victims, argued that the companies are "directly liable for their conduct because they had consciously and deliberately kept the poison in the herbicide in order to maximize their profits, knowing that it would be used on a massive scale." We are now seeing years later the fruit of that terrible poisonous product, said Moore. It could be months before the judges issue a decision on the appeal.

Militant/Róger Calero

Flanked by supporters, Vietnamese victims of Agent Orange (from left) Vo Thanh Hai, Nguyen Thi Hong (in wheelchair), Nguyen Muoi (third from left, standing), and Nguyen Van Quy (in wheelchair) enter a New York City courtroom June 18 for an appeal of their lawsuit against U.S. chemical companies.

Young Socialists join swirling debates at U.S. Social Forum

This column is written and edited by members of the Young Socialists, a revolutionary socialist youth organization. For more information contact the YS at 306 W. 37th St., 10th floor, New York, NY 10018; tel.: (212) 629-6649; e-mail: youngsocialists@mac.com.

YOUNG SOCIALISTS IN ACTION

BY BEN O'SHAUGHNESSY

ATLANTA, June 27—Carrying banners and signs demanding "Stop the raids and deportations!"; "Legalization now!"; "Not one penny, not one person for Washington's wars"; "Troops out of Iraq and Afghanistan"; and "U.S. hands off Cuba and Venezuela," the Young Socialists marched here today at the opening rally of the U.S. Social Forum. They joined thousands of fellow youth and others under the slogan, "Another world is possible; another U.S. is necessary."

The YS is participating in the Social Forum to meet other young fighters repulsed by war, oppression, and exploitation. We are discussing and debating the most effective way to make another world—one based on human solidarity and not on increasing the profits of the ruling billionaire families.

The Young Socialists have entered the summer months with a full plate of rounded political activity, further integrating the organization into the working-class movement. From joining in discussions with coal miners in Utah about the need to strengthen the unions to fight for life and limb on the job; to protesting recent *migra* raids at worksites in places like New Haven, Connecticut; to continuing defense of the Cuban Revolution, YS members across the country are reaching out to other youth who want to find a road forward.

Militant/Ben Joyce

Young Socialist contingent marches at opening of U.S. Social Forum in Atlanta

These activities are combined with a series of summer educational programs in Atlanta, New York, San Francisco, and Twin Cities. Through regular weekly classes, young socialists are digging into the program, history, and continuity of the communist movement to better arm us for engaging in struggles today.

These are just some examples of what the Young Socialists, a revolutionary communist youth organization, carries out on a weekly basis.

The Young Socialists seeks to win youth—who abhor the violence of imperialist war, increasing economic uncertainty, and dog-eat-dog values of the capitalist system—to the revolutionary capacity of the working class and its allies worldwide.

To get involved in classes and the other activities of the YS in your area, contact us at the info above or get in touch with the *Militant* distributor nearest you in the directory on page 8. If you're in Atlanta for the U.S. Social Forum, you'll find us at the Pathfinder Book center at 1146 Ralph David Abernathy Blvd. SW. Call us there at (404) 758-2151.

Socialists campaign with 'Militant,' 'New International'

Continued from front page

taken a goal of selling 250 subscriptions to the socialist newsweekly and 100 copies of the two most recent issues of *New International*, a magazine of Marxist politics and theory.

In the first day, 26 participants signed up for subscriptions and 3 bought copies of *New International*. More than 50 socialist campaigners will join in the effort through the weekend.

Members of the Young Socialists, Socialist Workers Party, and other *Militant* supporters attending the Forum are introducing people to a working-class perspective as they participate in wide-ranging discussions. Among those who signed up for a subscription today was a student from Rhode Island who had subscribed in the past and was glad to renew.

For new and current subscribers to the *Militant,* three Pathfinder titles are being offered at steep discounts: *The First and Second Declarations of Havana* and *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution* are on sale for $5, and the pamphlet *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning* is on sale for a dollar. All Forum participants can pick up the two newest issues of *New International* magazine for $10 each and any other Pathfinder title at a 15 percent discount.

Militant readers can take advantage of this offer by bringing the coupon on page 6 to any *Militant* and Pathfinder distributor listed on page 8, or online at www.pathfinderpress.com by entering USSF2007 in the space for Coupon Code on the Review and Submit page (see ad on page 6). The offer is good until July 15.

500 rally and march in Oregon against raid

Continued from front page

pay rent.

"Teachers began to notice that students were getting text messages and crying. A number did not come back to school all that week and missed their eighth grade dance and graduation," Carolina Gonzalez, a teacher at the George Middle School in Portland, told the rally. "This is real terror and it needs to stop."

The Portland Immigrant Rights Coalition (PIRC), which organized the protest, announced they will sponsor a rally at the ICE Building at 4:30 p.m. on the day of any future raids.

Speakers at the rally represented a variety of organizations. Rev. William Sinkford, president of the Unitarian Universalist Association, said that 5,000 delegates at a Unitarian conference in Portland were voting on a resolution calling for a moratorium on raids.

Claire Oliveros, of the Portland Committee for Human Rights in the Philippines, said that 60,000 people emigrate from the Philippines to the United States every year. Two Filipino women were among those arrested at Del Monte, she added.

A number of students were part of the demonstration. "We're all immigrants in this country," said Somerset Fetter, a college student at Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington. "The U.S. has done more harm around the world than any of these immigrant workers who are just trying to feed their families."

"I am going to the Social Forum in Atlanta and I thought it was important to link up with other organizations active in the struggle," said Jami Williams, a student at South Puget Sound Community College in Olympia. Williams said she belongs to a club there called Building Revolution By Increasing Community Knowledge (BRICK). "I wanted to come to Portland to show solidarity with the Del Monte workers and their families and to demand an end to the raids and deportations."

In a related event, immigrant rights activists and day laborers rallied in Portland on June 25 to demand immigration reform and for the rights of the laborers to wait for work without harassment.

Workers at PM Beef fight for union contract

Continued from front page

12. Agents of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raided the large Swift hog slaughterhouse there and arrested 239 workers. The same day ICE rounded up nearly 1,300 workers at six Swift plants nationwide.

Reporters for the *Militant* interviewed four union supporters. They discussed the background to the victory and what lies ahead in the fight for a contract. The workers asked that their last names not be printed for fear of retaliation by the bosses.

Most of the 500 workers at PM Beef are immigrants from Latin America. Among the abuses workers cite are the line speed, expensive medical insurance, and being cheated on wages.

Workers said the company carried out an intensive antiunion campaign leading up to the vote. The bosses exploited the immigration raid in Worthington to try to intimidate the workers.

"Some supervisors were saying that there would be an immigration raid if there is a union since the company would be more public," said Graciela, a PM Beef worker. "Some supervisors said the company would have to close. The company held meetings every day with groups of 12 workers at a time and showed us videos."

"In order to counter the company, union supporters talked informally at breaks and in the bathrooms," explained Maria, another worker. "There were also formal meetings every few weeks of union supporters, called by UFCW union organizers. These meetings became larger and established momentum for the union. Some supervisors who are Guatemalan even gave up their supervisory positions and became workers for a while. The company really worked on them and won them back."

"The union also brought up a staff organizer from Iowa. He visited all of the workers' homes and talked to them," she said.

"Three times in the last year workers have stopped working," said Daniel, who is employed in the kill department, describing the resistance by workers in the plant. "One time the chuck boners stopped working because the line was too fast. Two different times the six workers at the start of the line stopped work to protest the line speed. Each time this happened the company tried to continue production by slowing the line to very slow."

"A year ago eight or so chuck boners went together to the office to complain about the line speed," he added.

Many of the workers at PM Beef Holdings are from Guatemala. Maria said the company worked hard to deceive and intimidate the Guatemalan workers.

"Maybe 80 percent of the workers are Guatemalan," said Imelda, a Guatemalan immigrant who is a knife worker at the company. "Even though the first language for many Guatemalan workers is a Mayan Indian language, all of them could speak a lot of Spanish. They were able to participate in all the discussions of the workers. Like other workers, most of them supported the union."

Now the challenge is fighting for a new contract, workers said.

"Since the victory in the election little has changed in the plant for the workers," said Graciela. "The speed of the line accelerates less rapidly when it starts. For a few weeks the supervisors did not yell at us. Now they have started again."

"In a few days the workers will elect a negotiating committee for a contract," Maria said. "We will also be stating our priorities for a new contract. There are new indications the company might be willing to negotiate."

"Now we will really have to hold together," added Daniel. "We will have to be strong in order to get the changes we need."

Rebecca Williamson contributed to this article.

ON THE PICKET LINE

Teachers in Massachusetts strike over wages and health benefits

QUINCY, Massachusetts—Teachers walked out in this Boston suburb June 8.

"We're fighting for a fair salary and to maintain our health-care benefits," said Tim Carew, a music teacher at North Quincy High School for four years. "We're very unified; the vote to strike was close to 100 percent."

The 890 members of the Quincy Education Association had been without a contract since August 2006. State law forbids teachers to strike. On June 12, the union members voted to continue the strike even though a Superior Court judge had ordered them back to work.

Teachers returned to work two days later with an announcement of a tentative settlement, which the teachers later approved.

Several students joined the picket line outside North Quincy High School. "Our teachers are taking a stand. It's kind of cool to see them rebel—a good example to follow," said Hannah Chan, a junior at the school. "They deserve to be respected."

—Sarah Ullman

South Africa: Striking public workers reject gov't pay offer

Hundreds of thousands of public sector workers have been on strike since June 1, in what has become the biggest and most protracted strike in South Africa since the end of apartheid in 1994, reported Agence France-Presse. The workers are demanding a 10 percent wage increase. The unions turned down a revised government offer of a 7.5 percent pay raise June 22. The unions represent about 60 percent of the country's 1 million public employees, including in the schools and hospitals.

—Brian Williams

Militant/Sarah Ullman

Students join striking teachers at June 12 picket line in Quincy, Massachusetts.

Communist Party argues against demanding troops 'Out Now'

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON—In the past few months, several articles in the *People's Weekly World* (*PWW*), a newspaper reflecting the views of the Communist Party USA (CPUSA), have taken issue with other opponents of Washington's war in Iraq who call for immediate withdrawal of imperialist troops.

The pieces advocate that opponents of the war support proposals in Congress to set a date for withdrawing the troops, even if they are tacked onto bills to fund the war. This reflects the continued evolution of the CPUSA away from any pretense of building a revolutionary workers party and instead toward a radical political association entrenched in bourgeois politics.

In the May 26–June 1 *PWW*, the paper's national political correspondent Tim Wheeler penned an opinion piece entitled, "The dubious history of a slogan." In it, Wheeler argues that those who chant, "Out Now!" against the Iraq war today are making an error, just as those who chanted that same slogan against the war in Vietnam did.

On April 24, 1971, the National Peace Action Coalition (NPAC) and the People's Coalition for Peace and Justice (PCPJ) organized a march of half a million people in Washington, D.C., against the war in Vietnam around the demand "Out Now!" Despite the massive turnout, Wheeler says, the movement was weakened by NPAC's refusal to support resolutions in Congress to end the war by a "date certain"—a demand supported by PCPJ and the CPUSA.

"Today, as in 1971," Wheeler wrote, "the antiwar bloc is growing on Capitol Hill, with Democrats holding a slim majority . . . we must be supportive of the compromises the antiwar bloc is forced to make to win a bipartisan majority against the war."

Similarly, an editorial in the March 17–23 issue of *PWW* entitled "A path out of Iraq" welcomed the House approval of the $100 billion war funding bill as "an exit strategy with a firm end date."

"Isn't it better to have troops out of Iraq by next year, through a concerted coalition effort, than to still be holding anniversary vigils with the slogan 'Out Now'?" it said.

The *PWW* writings address political differences with groups that the CPUSA works with in United for Peace and Justice (UFPJ), one of the main coalitions that have organized demonstrations against the war in Iraq.

In a report to the CPUSA National Committee March 24, which is posted on the party's web site, CPUSA chairman Sam Webb called the March 23 U.S. House of Representative's approval of a war funding bill with a timeline for troop redeployment "a major victory." But, he noted, some peace groups, such as UFPJ, Code Pink, Peace Action, and others, did not see it that way and actively campaigned against the bill.

Webb also said that some members of the CPUSA have asked whether the party's current position contradicts a past convention resolution calling for immediate withdrawal. Webb said the convention resolution was "never intended to box us in or fence us off from responding to new conditions on the ground."

For decades the CPUSA has tried to pass itself off as the rightful bearer of the legacy of the October 1917 Bolshevik-led Russian Revolution. In his report to the National Committee, Webb frequently quotes V.I. Lenin, a central leader of the Bolsheviks. Webb takes the quotes out of context in order to justify the CPUSA and top labor leadership's course of class collaboration with the bosses and their parties, the Democrats and Republicans; and voting for war appropriations—a course against which Lenin was an implacable opponent.

In a section in his report on tactics Webb said, "The real task, however, is to combine partial demands that elicit broad support and are winnable in the near term with more advanced demands that are not yet supported by a broad constituency."

Webb described a nonbinding resolution against sending an additional 20,000 troops to Iraq along with the war funding bill as "partial demand[s]."

Civilian deaths in Afghan war rise

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON—The U.S. and NATO armies occupying Afghanistan have come under increasing criticism for killing civilians during military operations there. Even Afghan president Hamid Karzai, a loyal supporter of the U.S.-led invasion and occupation of the country, has said the foreign troops have been "careless."

More than 100 civilians were killed in NATO operations the week of June 17. Afghan authorities said 25 people were killed in a NATO airstrike June 22 in a village in Helmand province. Seven children were killed in a religious compound during a June 18 U.S.-led airstrike in the eastern province of Paktika.

In response to the criticism, U.S. Brig. Gen. Joseph Votel, NATO's deputy commander for operations in eastern Afghanistan, said existing procedures for avoiding civilian deaths are sufficient.

"We think the procedures that we have in place are good—they work," Votel said. There are about 50,000 U.S. and NATO troops in Afghanistan, the majority of which are from the United States.

Pakistani officials said 10 civilians were killed in Pakistan's North Waziristan region when NATO forces conducted strikes against a group of alleged Taliban attempting to cross the border.

Acbar, a coalition of Afghan and international relief agencies, cited 14 instances in which civilians had been killed for simply driving or walking too close to NATO troops. The total deaths, including combatants, according to the UN, have risen fourfold over the past two years, with 2,800 so far this year.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO

25 CENTS
THE MILITANT
A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY/PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

July 9, 1982

Pennsylvania Governor Thornburgh signed into law this month an extremely restrictive anti-abortion bill.

The bill forces a 24-hour waiting period on women seeking abortions, and requires parental consent for teenage women who want to terminate their pregnancies.

This new law follows by a couple of weeks Rhode Island's passage of two anti-abortion measures. One would force women to notify their husbands that they plan to have an abortion. The other requires parental consent for minors, as well as stipulating that doctors must first tell women the "possible consequences" of an abortion—a transparent attempt to intimidate those seeking the operation.

The U.S. Supreme Court has announced that it will review the constitutionality of restrictive abortion laws in Virginia, Missouri, and Ohio, which contain many of the same provisions as the Pennsylvania and Rhode Island laws.

THE MILITANT
PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE
NEW YORK, N.Y. FIVE (5) CENTS

July 8, 1957

As we go to press, the first full reports are being received here on the ouster from the Soviet ruling clique of V.M. Molotov, Georgi Malenkov, Lazar Kaganovich, and Dmitri Shepilov. The dramatic ouster of these leading Stalinist bureaucrats reflects the continuing crisis of the entire Soviet bureaucracy as it erupted at the 20th Congress. There, an admission of Stalin's heinous crimes was made and a pledge to rectify them was offered as major concessions to the steadily increasing pressure of the Soviet people for democratic rights and improved living standards.

The official communiqué of the Soviet Communist Party on the present development indicates that the four were removed from the all-powerful Presidium of the party's Central Committee on charges, which closely follow those made by Khrushchev in his historic 20th-Congress indictment of Stalin.

THE MILITANT
Weekly Organ of the Communist League of America [Opposition]

July 9, 1932

There are millions of foreign born workers in this country. They constitute the backbone of American industry. In all the heavy industry, particularly in the unskilled sections, the immigrant workers make up the large bulk of those who keep the wheels of industry and commerce in motion.

But the crisis has been in full force for three years now. No sight of jobs or a reviving industry. There is no reason to doubt that the toiling masses will pass over from patient waiting to militant mass action.

The ruling class is watching this process intently. They are trying with every means at their disposal to head off the rising discontent. The first blows they strike are at the most advanced section of the movement. But they do not hit out directly. Through methods that characterize their hypocrisy, the capitalist legislatures hit out against the foreign born militants.

Klansman convicted in 1964 murder of Black youths

BY SUSAN LAMONT

BIRMINGHAM, Alabama—Ku Klux Klan member James Seale, 71, was found guilty June 14 in the 1964 murders of Henry Dee and Charles Moore, two young Black men who disappeared May 2 of that year in rural Franklin County, Mississippi. The two were 19 at the time.

Forty-three years after the murders, Seale was finally tried in a U.S. District Court in Jackson, Mississippi, on federal kidnapping and conspiracy charges.

The year 1964 was an important one in the mass proletarian movement that eventually brought down Jim Crow segregation in the South. In response to the call for Freedom Summer by civil rights organizations, hundreds of young people, many from northern campuses, came to Mississippi to aid in the fight of Blacks to win voting rights and to break down other segregationist barriers. In response, the Mississippi White Knights (as the local KKK was known) burned 64 crosses on a single April evening throughout the state. By June, the group had established 29 chapters, recruited thousands of members, and launched a rearguard campaign of violence and intimidation against civil rights fighters.

By the end of the summer, 80 people had been beaten, 35 shot at, 5 murdered, and more than 20 Black churches burned to the ground in the state. Among the victims were Freedom Summer volunteers James Chaney, Andrew Goodman, and Michael Schwerner, who were murdered by the Klan near Philadelphia, Mississippi, in June. In 2005, Mississippi Klansman Edgar Killen was finally convicted in those deaths.

The bodies of Dee and Moore, who had gone missing in May, were found in July during the massive search for the bodies of Chaney, Schwerner, and Goodman.

The prosecution's main witness was Charles Edwards, a confessed Klansman who belonged, along with Seale, to a Klan chapter led by Seale's father.

Charles Moore, killed along with Henry Dee in Mississippi by Ku Klux Klan member James Seale in 1964.

He agreed to testify against Seale after being granted immunity.

Seale and Edwards picked up Dee and Moore, who were hitchhiking, and drove them to the Homochitto National Forest where he and other Klansmen beat them unconscious, then drove them to an old channel of the Mississippi River in nearby Tallulah, Louisiana. There they tossed them into the river, bound and weighed down with a car engine block.

Moore was home from college after being suspended for taking part in a student protest. Dee worked in a local lumber yard.

Edwards and Seale were arrested in 1964 for the murders but were released by local officials and never stood trial. Edwards gave the FBI a statement at the time that said the Klan suspected the two young men of being Black Muslims plotting an armed uprising of local Blacks.

In many of the civil rights–era murders that have been brought to trial in recent years, the unrelenting pressure of victims' family members were key in finally forcing the government to take action. Thomas Moore, 62, brother of Charles Moore, has been fighting for years to have the case reopened. He was present in the Jackson courtroom, along with other family members of Dee and Moore, as well as family members of other victims of Klan violence from that struggle.

Event marks court case ending ban on interracial marriage

BY TAMAR ROSENFELD

BIRMINGHAM, Alabama, June 14—A forum here tonight marked the 40th anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court decision that struck down state laws preventing and punishing interracial marriages. About 75 people attended the event, which took place at the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute (BCRI).

When *Loving v. Virginia* was argued before the Supreme Court in 1967, 17 states had what were known as "anti-miscegenation laws" prohibiting marriage between a white person and a Black person.

In 1958 Richard Loving and Mildred Jeter, a white man and an African American woman, married in Washington, D.C., because interracial marriage was illegal in Virginia, where they lived.

After the couple returned to Virginia, police broke into their home at 2:00 a.m. and dragged them from their bedroom to the county jail. The Lovings were charged with violation of the 1924 Racial Integrity Act.

On Jan. 6, 1959, the Lovings pled guilty and were sentenced to one year in jail. The judge's opinion stated, "Almighty God created the races white, black, yellow, malay and red, and he placed them on separate continents. And but for the interference with his arrangement there would be no cause for such marriages. The fact that he separated the races shows that he did not intend for the races to mix."

The judge suspended the Lovings's sentence for a period of 25 years on the condition that they leave Virginia and not return together for 25 years.

Encouraged by the massive civil rights battles of the early 1960s that challenged segregation and racist practices, the Lovings appealed their conviction on the grounds that it violated the 14th Amendment. Between 1963 and 1967, the case wended through state courts. All the while, the Lovings lived in exile in the District of Columbia.

The state courts held that Virginia had legitimate purposes "to preserve the racial integrity of its citizens," and to prevent "the corruption of blood," "a mongrel breed of citizens," and "the obliteration of racial pride." In 1967 the Supreme Court, under the impact of the mass movement for Black freedom developing in the 1960s, called the lower courts' statements "obviously an endorsement of the doctrine of White Supremacy," and overturned all the previous decisions upholding the ban. The couple returned to Virginia, where they lived together until Richard died in a car accident in 1975.

Tonight's event at the BCRI featured a panel of speakers who reviewed the history of the case and the status of interracial marriage in the United States today.

Keonna Greene, an intern at the BCRI, explained that Alabama was the last state in the country to repeal its constitutional ban on interracial marriage. Although the 1967 Supreme Court ruling applied to Alabama, "the state didn't change its constitution until the year 2000, and that was by popular vote."

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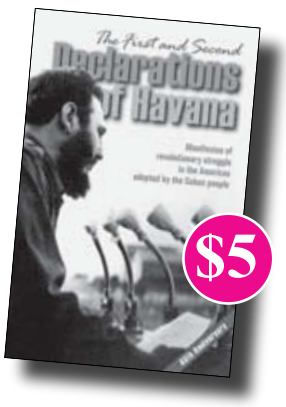

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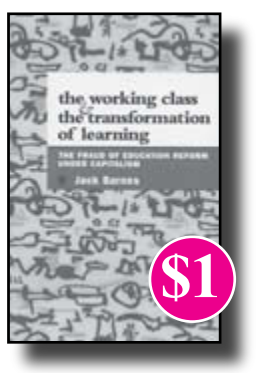

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Behind UN Kosova plan

Continued from front page

the talks in France, rejected it outright.

The U.S.-crafted plan was first presented in February by the UN envoy on Kosova's status, Martti Ahtisaari, a former president of Finland. It has since been amended twice to try to mute Moscow' objections, to no avail.

'Independence' under NATO boot

The plan would grant Kosova limited independence—its own flag, anthem, army, and constitution. But its government would be supervised by the European Union (EU) and the 17,000 NATO occupation forces, which include 1,500 U.S. troops, who would stay. So would the 2,000 UN policemen that include some 200 U.S. cops.

The plan has broad bipartisan support in the United States and is backed by all 27 EU member states.

In a June 10 visit to Tirana, Albania's capital, where he was well received, U.S. president George Bush spoke in favor of the proposal. He implied Washington may recognize an independent Kosova if the Ahtisaari plan falters at the United Nations.

Liberal forces back the proposal too. An editorial in the February 26 *New York Times* endorsed the Ahtisaari plan and said Kosova's independence "must be conditional." In an opinion column in the January 3 *Financial Times,* Joseph Biden, the Democratic chairman of the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee, wrote: "Kosovo is not ready for full sovereignty. Even after independence, NATO and the international community will need to provide security guarantees for Kosovo's minorities and strengthen its economy and institutions."

Moscow, which has veto power at the UN Security Council, has threatened to veto any proposal that would break Kosova off from Serbia, which considers it its territory.

The Russian rulers are using the dispute to try to maintain some influence in Europe and slow down Russia's encirclement by the U.S. military, which has accelerated with Washington's "war on terrorism." This includes the installation of components of the U.S. missile shield in Eastern Europe—allegedly to stop Iranian missiles—and the establishment of U.S. bases in former Soviet republics in Central Asia, such as Uzbekistan, which U.S. forces used in 2001 as a springboard for the invasion of Afghanistan.

Serbia's parliament overwhelmingly rejected the Ahtisaari plan in February. Serbian premier Vojislav Kostunica said June 25 that the U.S.-led efforts to break Kosova away from Serbia are leading "directly to the worsening of relations" between Belgrade and Washington.

The pro-Belgrade forces are also couching their arguments in the framework of the "war on terror."

Bishop Artemije, the senior cleric in Kosova of the Serb Orthodox church, which is dominant in Serbia, told the *Financial Times* last October that an independent Kosova would provide a base for an "extremist Islamic jihad." Followers of the Wahhabi strain of Sunni Islam and of al-Qaeda would be drawn there, endangering the Balkans, the rest of Europe, and the United States, he claimed.

Most Albanians, who comprise 90 percent of Kosova's 2 million people, are Muslim.

Many Kosovars oppose UN plan

Among Kosovar Albanians a majority back the UN plan, according to the big-business media. Thousands, however, have actively opposed it.

"This is a typical colonial situation," Albin Kurti told the *New York Times* in a June 9 interview, referring to the NATO/UN occupation of Kosova. "Of course it has modern wrapping, but it remains a colonial situation."

Kurti is a leader of Vetevendosja, which means "self-determination" in Albanian, a group that has spearheaded recent protests against the Ahtisaari plan. In the 1990s, Kurti helped lead the Independent Students Union at the University of Pristina, which initiated many of the protests at the time for Kosova's sovereignty and against the repression by the Stalinist regime of Slobodan Milosevic in Belgrade.

Vetevendosja has drawn the ire of the imperialist-led occupation forces and their spokespeople. An article in the January 25 *Financial Times* described the group as a Kosova Albanian "student-based organisation known for slashing the tyres of UN vehicles in protest against continued 'colonial' rule."

A demonstration the group organized February 10 to protest the Ahtisaari plan was attacked by UN police forces who fired tear gas and rubber bullets, killing two people and wounding 82. Stephen Curtis, a former British cop and the commander of the UN police in Kosova, resigned later. A UN report blamed a Romanian police unit for the deaths and injuries, but claimed there was insufficient evidence to charge the cops involved.

Kurti, however, was arrested and accused of leading a march "that led to the deaths of persons and injury of 82 others," according to the *Times*. The student leader was imprisoned for four months and was reportedly released June 7. He was then placed under house arrest while awaiting trial.

Protests continued after Kurti's incarceration. On March 3, for example, several thousand Albanians marched through Pristina to protest the U.S.-crafted plan, saying it does not amount to independence, the Associated Press reported.

Kurti told the *Times* the UN plan would leave Washington and its European allies with too much power, noting it would allow a figure appointed by the occupation forces to intervene in Kosova's police and courts.

His remarks reflect the opinions of at least a substantial minority of Albanians in Kosova. His statements, and the treatment of Kurti and his supporters by the occupation troops, show the deceit in U.S. government claims that NATO intervened in Kosova to stop the "ethnic cleansing" by the Milosevic regime and establish "democracy."

How Washington intervened

Kosova was an autonomous region of Serbia until 1989, when the Milosevic regime revoked its status and imposed a state of emergency that lasted for a decade.

Albanians in Kosova won national rights, including recognition of their language and culture, as a result of the Yugoslav revolution, which abolished capitalism and established nationalized property relations in industry and on the land in the 1940s.

Due to its Stalinist misleadership, however, the revolution degenerated, undermining the initial gains workers and farmers had made. This included the reversal of affirmative action measures adopted in the early years, aimed at closing the gap between the least developed areas of Yugoslavia, like Kosova, and other republics. When the worldwide capitalist crisis in the mid-1970s affected Yugoslavia, for example, the results were different from region to region. By the mid-1980s, while countrywide joblessness was 14 percent, it had jumped to 50 percent in Kosova.

During that period, ruling bureaucrats in Serbia, Croatia, and other former Yugoslav republics began to fight to keep as much land and resources as they could under their control in order to maintain their privileges. The wars that ensued—fueled by imperialist intervention, which included in its goals the restoration of capitalism in the country—led to Yugoslavia's breakup. (For more see "10 years since imperialist intervention in Bosnia" in the Dec. 26, 2005, *Militant*, and "How U.S. imperialism, allies fueled the Yugoslav war" in the Jan. 9, 2006, issue.)

To justify their course and blunt working-class resistance, competing bureaucrats in various Yugoslav republics used nationalist demagogy. Among the main culprits was the Milosevic regime in Belgrade. Milosevic launched his nationalist tirades against Albanians in Pristina, in order to get support for crushing a 1988 miners' strike in Kosova and to push back demands to end anti-Albanian discrimination.

As protests against police repression and for self-determination picked up by the end of the 1990s, the Milosevic regime resorted to genocidal measures. During Belgrade's "ethnic cleansing" drive in 1999, up to 12,000 people, mostly Albanians, were killed and 1 million were temporarily expelled from Kosova.

Working people in Serbia toppled the hated Milosevic regime in a popular rebellion a year later.

NATO foments ethnic hatred

Washington and other imperialist powers bombed Yugoslavia for 78 days in 1999 and then sent in troops under the banner of protecting the persecuted Albanians. In the last seven years, however, the NATO forces have both blocked self-rule and fomented animosity between Albanians and the Serb minority, most of whom live in isolated enclaves.

In 2004, for example, there were "ethnic cleansing"–type attacks in which more than 30 Serbs were killed and 3,600 were driven out of Kosova, while NATO "peacekeepers" stood by.

In some areas, segregation has become worse than under Milosevic. In Mitrovica, for example, a mining town, all of the 300 Serb families on the south side have been forced to the city's northern part. The south is now predominantly inhabited by Albanians. In the north, the 3,000 Albanians and Bosniaks that remain live in enclaves isolated from the 17,000 Serbs. Mitrovica is now divided along the Ibar River.

In May 2005, NATO soldiers from Norway in Kosova produced a spoof music video, set to the Beach Boys tune "Kokomo." The clip shows Norwegian troops dancing in combat gear in fields and military bases there and singing: "Down in Kosovo, we'll kick some ass and then we'll see how it goes, and then we really don't know. Good luck Kosovo. . . . It's Europe and NATO, why the hell do we go?" These and other insulting lyrics, including jabs at "Serbian bad guys," caused indignation in the region and a diplomatic spat between the governments of Serbia and Norway.

An article in an upcoming issue will describe the origins of the fight for self-determination in Kosova, including interviews Kurti and other student leaders gave to the Militant *in the 1990s.*

AFP/Getty Images/Dimitar Dilkoff

Thousands of Albanians, supporters of Vetevendosje (Self-Determination), march in Pristina, Kosova's capital, March 3 to protest U.S.-crafted plan for "limited independence."

AFP/Getty Images photos by Ermal Meta

Left: Albanians carry injured protester in Pristina, February 10. Right: UN cops fire tear gas and rubber bullets that day at Vetevendosje rally, killing two people and injuring 82.

For further reading

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Castro in 1971 Chile visit warned of imperialist threats

Below is an excerpt from Fidel Castro on Chile*, one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month in July. It contains the speeches and interviews from Cuban president Fidel Castro's 25-day visit to Chile in 1971. Chilean president Salvador Allende Gossens, a Socialist Party left-winger and longtime supporter of the Cuban Revolution, invited the Cuban leader to Chile. During his visit, Castro warns of impending counterrevolution and stresses the example of Cuba, where workers and farmers mobilized to defeat imperialist intervention. Allende was killed resisting the military overthrow of his government on Nov. 11, 1973. Copyright © 1982 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.*

Chilean president Salvador Allende, left, and his guards attempt to resist military attack on the National Palace, Nov. 11, 1973. Allende was killed and thousands of workers, union leaders, and peasants were brutally murdered in the wake of the U.S.-backed coup.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY FIDEL CASTRO

I was amazed when I heard the President say that a very important newspaper in Washington or New York had published statements by a high-ranking government official who said that "The days of the people's government in Chile are numbered." (Boos)

I would like to point out—not that government official's rudeness, intromission, his arrogance, his offensiveness, his insolence—that it's been many years since some crazy U.S. official said that the days of the Cuban Revolution were numbered. (Shouts and exclamations)

It would be logical, in view of a statement like that, not only to get angry, to protest against the insult to one's dignity, to protest against the offense, but also to ask what makes them believe such a thing and why they feel so confident about it. What kind of calculations have they made? What computers have they put into operation to figure this out? This doesn't mean that Yankee computers don't make mistakes. They do, and we know it for a fact. We have good evidence that they do make mistakes. In the case of Girón, the Pentagon's computers, the CIA's computers, the U.S. Government computers, everybody's computers, were wrong—a million times wrong.

Nevertheless, we should ask what grounds they have for such optimism, for such assurance. What is this assurance based on? And you are the only ones who can supply the answer.

Or maybe you'd be interested in hearing the opinion of a visitor who is not a tourist? (Exclamations of "Yes!")

All those in favor, raise your hands. (All hands go up)

Well, in view of the permission granted me in this plebiscite (shouts of "Fidel, Fidel, Fidel!") to express my opinion in matters of concept, I say that assurance is based on the weakness of this revolutionary process, on the weakness of the ideological battle, on the weakness of the mass struggle, on weaknesses displayed in the face of the enemy! (Applause) The outside enemy, which supports the inside enemy, is trying to take advantage of the slightest crack, the slightest weakness.

In fact, I could also say that your efforts to consolidate your forces, to unite them and to increase them, have been weak.

You're going through a period which is very special, but not a new one, in the arena of class struggle.

There are countless examples of this. You're going through that period in the process in which the fascists—to call them by their right name—are trying to beat you to the streets, are trying to beat you out of the middle strata of the population. There is a specific moment in every revolutionary process when fascists and revolutionaries struggle for the support of the middle strata.

Revolutionaries are honest. They don't go around telling lies. They don't go around spreading terror and anguish or hatching up terrible schemes.

The fascist . . . well, the fascists stop at nothing. They'll try to find the weakest spot. They'll invent the most incredible lies. They'll try to spread terror and dissatisfaction among the middle strata, telling them the most incredible lies. Their objective is to win over the middle strata. And they'll appeal to the basest sentiments. They'll try to arouse feelings of chauvinism—that narrow-minded nationalism—all sorts of selfish sentiments. . . .

They are trying to demoralize the revolutionaries. There are places where I found the revolutionaries kind of hard-hit, and there are places where they even looked demoralized.

If I weren't sincere, if I didn't believe in the truth, I wouldn't dare say what I have just said. It might even sound as if I were saying something the enemy could use to his advantage, to gain ground. No! The only way in which the enemy can gain ground is by deceit, by confusion, by ignorance, by the lack of awareness about problems! (Applause)

If you want my opinion, the success or the failure of this unusual process will depend on the ideological battle and the mass struggle. It will also depend on the revolutionaries' ability to grow in numbers, to unite and to win over the middle strata of the population. (Applause) This is because in our countries—countries of relatively little development—these middle strata are very large and are very susceptible to lies and deceit. However, in the ideological struggle, nobody is ever won over except through the truth, sound arguments and reason. There is no question about that.

July BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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EDITORIAL

How to fight for 'another world'

Thousands of people have gathered in Atlanta for the U.S. Social Forum, held under the slogan, "Another world is possible; another U.S. is necessary." Delegates are debating what such a world should look like, and how to get there.

Class exploitation, police brutality, imperialist war, environmental destruction, and racist oppression are endemic to capitalism, a system based on maximizing the profits of a tiny minority at the expense of the vast majority. Capitalism in its highest stage, imperialism, is responsible for and profits from the most heinous crimes against the world's toilers. These include the millions who die every year from starvation and curable diseases in Africa, Asia, and other parts of the semicolonial world; or the thousands of workers killed, maimed, and made sick on the job as a result of the bosses' relentless drive for profit. The rulers' brutality—whether meted out by cops on the streets or by imperialist troops in Iraq, Afghanistan, the Philippines, and other theaters of Washington's "global war on terror"—is part and parcel of capitalism's dog-eat-dog values.

In their voracious quest for profit, the U.S. rulers are on the offensive against the wages, working conditions, and living standards of the working class in the United States. With this grinding assault, however, the bosses are sewing the seeds of their system's eventual destruction. Pushed to the wall by the unrelenting speedup, abuse, and ever more intolerable conditions of life and work, workers are finding themselves with no choice but to resist. Even as standoffs and setbacks continue to be the rule for the labor movement today, the swelling ranks of immigrant workers, many denied legal papers, are playing a central role in fights for dignity on and off the job. The recent union organizing victory by packinghouse workers in Windom, Minnesota, is a case in point.

On May Day this year, nearly half a million workers took to the streets in cities and towns across the country to demand legalization of undocumented immigrants. Together with ongoing actions against raids and deportations, these mobilizations are a harbinger of the emergence of a new working-class vanguard—in the belly of the world's strongest imperialist power. The questions of class solidarity and class consciousness posed in the battle for legalization lay the basis for strengthening the trade unions and transforming them into effective tools for working-class resistance to the bosses' offensive.

Nearly five decades ago, Cuba's workers and peasants took political power out of the hands of the capitalists in that country and ended imperialist domination. With a conscious proletarian political leadership, Cuban toilers transformed the economic foundations of that island nation, and the social relations that went along with it. They have offered internationalist aid with no strings attached to working people around the world. And they have stood down Washington's unwavering threats ever since.

The Cuban Revolution shows that revolution is not only necessary—it is possible. To overthrow the destructive social order that dominates the world today, workers and farmers in the United States must make such a socialist revolution.

The U.S. rulers will stop at nothing to defend their property and privileges. To defeat the most powerful ruling class in history, working people in the United States need a political leadership that's prepared well beforehand. They need a revolutionary party deeply rooted in the working class, the only force in society that has the power, the interests, and the capacity to go all the way. Such a movement exists in the United States today—the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialists. Workers, farmers, and young people who truly want to fight to win a better world should join the communist movement.

U.S. troops surround Iraqi city

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for power in Iraq.

The offensive in Baquba is the largest assault on an Iraqi city since the ground and air attack led by 15,000 U.S. troops on Fallujah against military remnants of Saddam Hussein's Baath party regime in November 2004. Unlike in Fallujah, in Baquba the U.S. military is being aided by Baathist groups that have turned against al-Qaeda.

Baathist militias such as the Islamic Army and the 1920 Revolution Brigades, which had been fighting the U.S. military until recently, are now reportedly helping U.S. forces identify al-Qaeda members in Baquba and providing them with valuable information.

An Iraqi Army officer told the *Washington Post* that these groups are operating under an umbrella group called the United Jihad Factions Council and they have been issued special insignias to distinguish them from al-Qaeda members. There have been reports of fighting between al-Qaeda and the Islamic Army in Baghdad.

In spite of the offensive, waves of bombings continue across Baghdad, showing that Washington is far from stabilizing Iraq.

Four Sunni sheiks were killed while meeting at a heavily fortified hotel in Baghdad used by members of the Iraqi parliament. The bombing was one of five on June 25 that killed more than 40 Iraqis. The sheiks were members of the Anbar Salvation Council, a Sunni tribal group that has cooperated with the U.S. military and Iraqi government in driving al-Qaeda from Anbar province.

For the second time this year, Iraqi prime minister Nouri al-Maliki's cabinet has approved a draft national oil law to distribute revenues among the competing capitalist factions.

A first draft of the law was approved by Maliki's cabinet in February. But leaders of the semiautonomous Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) withdrew their support for it after the central government added a series of provisions that gave Baghdad greater control over oil development.

Maliki's cabinet also approved a draft law giving jobs to thousands of former members of Hussein's regime who were purged following the U.S.-led invasion.

Both laws are among several nonbinding "benchmarks" the U.S. Congress has instructed the Iraqi government to try to achieve as part of the $100 billion war appropriations bill approved in May.

LETTERS

Impressed with paper

I recently came across an issue of your paper and I was quite impressed. I enjoyed every minute spent reading it, including the Spanish section.

I was told that I could receive an introductory three month subscription and I can renew my subscription at the discount offered to prisoners. So if you would please start me a subscription it would be more than appreciated.

A prisoner
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Social forum

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contingents included the Coalition of Labor Union Women, Choice USA, Coalition of Immokalee Workers, Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN), Jobs with Justice, Direct Action Working Group, and dozens of others.

This is the first nationwide Social Forum to take place in the United States. It grows out of the World Social Forum, which began in 2001 in Porto Alegre, Brazil, as an international gathering against "neoliberal globalization."

Joseph Lowery, a founding member of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, addressed the opening rally. Other speakers included leaders of the Cherokee and Aleut indigenous peoples, who explained that the Forum was taking place on land stolen from Native peoples.

Many have come to the Forum to exchange experiences in struggles. Others have come to meet fellow fighters and figure out what are the next steps to advance issues they're concerned about.

"We're going to share the work we've been doing in the Asian and working-class communities, so we can learn from our allies, and they can learn from us," said Eric Shih, 24, an organizer for the Chinese Progressive Association (CPA) in San Francisco. The CPA there is currently fighting for severance pay for 100 Chinese immigrant workers laid off with no notice at an electronics factory in the Bay Area, Shih said.

"We've been working to gain our treaty rights," said Lisana Readbear from the Honor the Earth and the Indigenous Environmental Network in South Dakota. "I'm here for solidarity, networking, and the progression of a movement for social justice."

Rainbow Alvarez, who came with a group of 10 from the Youth Justice Coalition in Los Angeles, was holding a banner with a portrait of Deandre Brunston, a 23-year-old African American killed by Los Angeles cops in 2003. "We came here to get a bigger network, and bring to life the bigger issues," she said. "L.A. is addicted to incarceration. And now the L.A. cops are taking their repression tactics elsewhere," she said, explaining that the Los Angeles Police Department sends "experts" to train cops in other cities.

Dozens of hospital workers wearing union T-shirts and holding signs greeted the march as it wound past Grady Hospital. The workers explained that Grady, which they describe as the last hospital in Atlanta primarily serving the uninsured, is being threatened with closure. "The message is health care for all," Ana Avato, an organizer for American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), told the *Militant*. AFSCME organizes workers at Grady.

Kellie Cavagnaro, who described herself as a student looking for a life of activism, said she came from Philadelphia to propose "mass unity of nonprofits into one body to unite around issues for social change in the U.S."

"I came to dialogue on immigration issues and mobilize for legalization for all," said Olivia Geiger, who teaches English as a second language (ESL) in Providence, Rhode Island. Geiger is part of a group of ESL teachers called English for Action/Comité en Acción, organized to fight for legalization for immigrants.

Demands for the rights of immigrants were prominent on signs and banners at today's action. The March 25 Coalition from Los Angeles brought a huge banner demanding, "Legalization Now!" in several languages. Others had signs calling for "Humane immigration reform," and "Stop anti-immigrant terrorism."

A lively contingent of the Young Socialists and Socialist Workers Party carried a banner reading, "Legalization now! Stop the raids and deportations." Other banners in this contingent read, "Not one penny, not one person for Washington's wars—Troops out now!" and "U.S. hands off Venezuela and Cuba."

Emily Paul contributed to this article.